

MHSA 8861 – Organization Theory and Organizational Behavior in Health Care

Please note that this syllabus is intended as a generic, representative syllabus for the MHSA 8861 course geared toward students in the MPH program. Specific requirements, textbooks, and schedules are subject to change each semester based on semester length, number of students in the course, scheduling requirements, relevant research or service opportunities that arise for student involvement, and other factors, including the instructor's efforts to update and improve the educational experience of students.

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Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the fields of organization theory and organizational behavior and their application to the management of health services organizations. The course will cover both “macro” and “micro” level issues relevant to health care organizations, including governance, the role of management as a profession in health service organizations, organizational structure and design, intra-organizational coordination and communication, the effective use of groups and teams, negotiation and conflict management, motivation, power and politics, initiating and managing innovation and change, and leadership.

Course Objectives

Through lectures, readings, discussions, cases, self-assessment inventories, student projects and presentations, the student should be able to:

1. Apply concepts, principles, and theories of management and behavioral sciences to organizing and managing health care organizations;
2. Understand the organization as an adaptive unit, functioning within a larger environment and within inter-organizational networks;
3. Identify alternative structural designs for health services organizations and circumstances when each may be most appropriate;
4. Develop and apply organizational diagnostic skills (i.e., to be able to evaluate individual, situational, and environmental factors that play a role in effective decision making and management);
5. Discuss, using specific theories and concepts, why organizational members think and behave as they do;
6. Articulate specific strategies and approaches for negotiating and dealing with conflict;

7. Understand how effective health care teams can be developed and maintained;
8. Discuss the sources of power and authority in health service organizations and to analyze the way in which power and authority are distributed among organizational subunits;
9. Describe the organizational processes that can be used to initiate and manage change within the organization; and
10. Articulate key theories of leadership and to begin to develop and clarify his or her own leadership values and philosophy;

Course Textbook

Robbins, S.F. (2005). Essentials of Organizational Behavior (8th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

In addition, supplemental readings from the professional literature to coincide with the subject material covered will be required. Readings will be posted to the WebCT course site the week that they are covered in class.

Course Evaluation and Grading

In class participation	15%
Online discussions	15%
Application paper	35%
Final exam	35%

The grading scale to evaluate student performance will be similar to that used by other Courses at AASU: 90-100(A), 80-89(B), 70-79(C), 65-70(D), <65(F). Any deviations from this standard scheme will be a result of the distribution of class scores.

In class participation: This course is designed as a seminar, so it is essential that you read the assigned materials for each class period, complete any assigned tasks, and come to class prepared to participate in the discussions. Your class participation grade will be based as much on the *quality* of your contributions as the *quantity* of your remarks.

Online discussions: Each week you will be responsible for posting your answers to the discussion questions posted on the WebCT site. We will use a threaded discussion format, so it is important that you read your classmates' responses to the questions in order to expound on or reply to their comments, rather than simply repeating something that has already been said. You must post at least one well thought out response to *each* discussion question. Your grade will be based on the quality and thoroughness of your responses as well as the extent to which they provoke (respectfully) or respond to discussion points made by your classmates. Questions will be posted on Thursday by 5:00 pm, and you will have until midnight Sunday night to post your responses.

Application paper: Each student must write a paper in which he or she applies the concepts covered in this course to either a film or a real-life event. The paper should include a brief summary of the film or the event as well as an analysis of the film or event from the perspective

of appropriate topics covered in class (e.g., personality profiles of key characters/players, motivation, communication styles, conflict resolution, leadership styles, organizational culture, power and politics, teamwork). “Richness” of analysis is a key criteria for evaluation of the paper, so be sure to choose a film or event for which there is appropriate subject matter and/or adequately detailed information to conduct a thorough analysis.

It is up to you to choose an appropriate film or event, but it must be approved by the instructor by the second week of the course. Some suggested films include: Drumline, Dead Poet’s Society, Master and Commander, Ghandi, Gettysburg, Henry V, Hoosiers, Friday Night Lights, Norma Rae, The Hunt for Red October, The Bounty, Wall Street, The Power of One, Taps, Twelve Angry Men, The Lord of the Flies, Apollo 13, Glory, The Charge of the Light Brigade, The Bridge of the River Kwai, Citizen Kane, Crimson Tide, and Remember the Titans. Some suggested events include: Ernest Shackleton’s failed voyage to the South Pole in 1914-1915, the NASA Challenger explosion in 1986, the NYFD response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound, Alaska, in 1989, the Mann Gulch forest fire disaster in 1949, and the Apollo 13 incident in 1970.

Your paper will be graded on the quality and comprehensiveness (“richness”) of your analysis and application of concepts from the course as well as the quality of your writing (including logic, “flow” of the paper, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and formatting). Papers should be typewritten, double-spaced, using 1 inch margins, and 12 point Times New Roman font. While there is no specific minimum number of pages, I expect that it will take at least 12 pages in order to fully cover the topics that are to be addressed.

Final exam: Due to the compressed time frame of the Summer Session D, there will be only one exam given during this course. The final exam will cover all topics from the textbook, readings, class discussions, and online discussion. The exam will include objective (true/false and multiple-choice) questions, short-answer questions, and essay questions. For the exam you may bring one sheet of standard letter size paper (8.5 x 11) on which you may write notes on both sides. No other outside materials may be used during the exam.

Miscellaneous

Students are strongly encouraged to attend class on a regular basis and to actively participate in all class discussion and activities for the purpose of optimizing the educational experience. While absences for legitimate reasons are certainly understandable and anticipated, unexcused absences are not acceptable. Unexcused absences constitute any absence from class where the student fails to inform the instructor either before hand or as soon as possible after the fact about the reasons for the absence. Such reasons must obviously be legitimate for an absence to be considered excused, and the instructor reserves the right to make inquiry with regard to such if deemed necessary. The instructor further reserves the right to ask a student to withdraw from the class if the number of total or unexcused absences is excessive, as determined by AASU policy. As stated before, any assignments missed due to an unexcused absence may not be made up by the student.

Academic dishonesty, as defined in the AASU Student Handbook, is strictly prohibited in this

course as in all others at AASU. Students are reminded that, as AASU students, they have a responsibility to adhere to and have knowledge of the principles of ethical conduct for AASU students as it applies to academic dishonesty. Violations of any of these principles will result in the student receiving an 'F' in the course as well as the potential for further prosecution for said violations by AASU and its respective governing bodies.

Course Schedule (this schedule is representative of a Summer 4-week semester and is subject to change based on differing semester schedules, holidays, and other factors).

Class meetings in unshaded rows will be conducted in person. Class meetings in shaded rows will be conducted using WebCT.

Week 1 Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to OT/OB • Foundations of Individual Behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 • Chapter 2 	
Week 1 Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Decision-Making • Conflict and Negotiation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 • Chapter 12 	
Week 2 Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personality and Emotions • Organizational Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 • Chapter 14 	
Week 2 Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Foundations of Organizational Structure • Power and Politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 • Chapter 13 • Chapter 11 	
Week 3 Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation: Concepts and Applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 • Chapter 5 	
Week 3 Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations of Group Behavior • Understanding Work Teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 • Chapter 8 	
Week 4 Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Creating Trust • Organizational Change and Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10 • Chapter 16 	
Week 4 Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Exam 		Application Paper Due